



TELEGRAM

Department of State

INCOMING AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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ACTION

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TAGS: SOPN, US, UR, PARM

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT JAMES RESTON OP-ED COLUMN, NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, HEADED "KISSINGER'S MISSION."

2. LATE ON THE NIGHT OF PRESIDENT FORD'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS, SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER FLEW TO MOSCOW, AND THE INTERESTING THING ABOUT THIS MISSION IS THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT PROPOSED IT, SUGGESTED FIRST ONE DATE, THEN A SECOND, AND FINALLY NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT ON A THIRD.

3. MR. KISSINGER WENT OFF, ON THE URGING OF PRESIDENT FORD, DESPITE THE PRESENT ILLNESS OF HIS WIFE, PROFESSING NOT TO KNOW WHAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAD IN MIND, BUT THE MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION IS THAT MOSCOW IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE RISING ANTI-SOVIET SENTIMENT IN THE UNITED STATES, AND IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN OVER STRATEGIC ARMS CONTROL, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ANGOLA.

4. THE ASSUMPTION IN WASHINGTON IS THAT AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE SOVIET POLITBURO DID NOT URGE MR. KISSINGER TO COME TO MOSCOW IN ORDER TO

HUMILIATE HIM. THIS WOULD CLEARLY CREATE A CRISIS AND REVIVE THE OLD SPIRIT OF THE COLD WAR IN THE US ELECTION DEBATES.

5. ACCORDINGLY, AT LEAST ON THIS ASSUMPTION, THERE IS REASON TO THINK THAT THE SOVIET UNION MAY BE PREPARED TO MAKE SOME TACTICAL IF NOT SUBSTANTIVE CONCESSIONS TO BREAK THE STALEMATE IN THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS, AND AVOID DEEPER INVOLVEMENT AS A KEY ISSUE BETWEEN MR. FORD AND RONALD REAGAN, AND BETWEEN THE REPUBLICANS AND SENATOR HENRY JACKSON IN THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

6. MOSCOW HAS NEVER PRETENDED THAT IT WAS INDIFFERENT TO THE OUTCOME OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES. NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV BOASTED THAT HE HAD MADE MOVES THAT MIGHT HELP JACK KENNEDY IN THE ELECTION OF 1960. THOUGH RICHARD NIXON WAS NEVER A FAVORITE OF THE SOVIETS, THEY CALCULATED THAT HE WOULD BE RE-ELECTED IN 1972, AND SAID SO, WITH RECKLESS INDISCRETION, AT THE STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS IN HELSINKI.

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7. EVENTS AFFECTING THE STATE OF THE WORLD CAN OFTEN BE MORE IMPORTANT IN ELECTIONS THAN SPEECHES ON THE STATE OF THE NATION. WE MAY NOT LIKE THIS--IN FACT WE DON'T LIKE IT AT ALL--BUT IT IS A FACT. IF MR. KISSINGER GETS A COMPROMISE ON THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN MOSCOW THIS WEEK, ESPECIALLY IF IT IS A GENUINE MOVE TOWARD LIMITATION OF THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE, BUT EVEN IF IT IS A TACTICAL COMPROMISE INDICATING SOME PROGRESS, IT WILL STILL BE A FACTOR IN THE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE, AND NOBODY KNOWS THIS BETTER THAN PRESIDENT FORD OR THE SOVIETS.

8. REAGAN OF CALIFORNIA IS ARGUING THAT THE FORD-KISSINGER POLICY OF DETENTE OR COEXISTENCE WITH MOSCOW IS A "ONE-WAY STREET" AND A FRAUD IN WHICH WASHINGTON MAKES ALL THE CONCESSIONS AND MOSCOW GETS ALL THE TECHNOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGES. SCOOP JACKSON ON THE DEMOCRATIC SIDE IS MAKING THE SAME ARGUMENT, WITH MORE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS.

9. LEONID BREZHNEV HAS TO GO BEFORE THE COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS IN A FEW WEEKS AND MR. FORD HAS TO GO AGAINST MR. REAGAN IN THE NEW HAMPSHIRE PRIMARY, DEFENDING THE POLICY OF DETENTE, AND THEY HAVE A COMMON INTEREST IN DEMONSTRATING THAT COMPROMISE IS BETTER THAN CONFRONTATION AND A RETURN TO THE COLD WAR.

10. ALSO, IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THE SOVIETS CAN MAKE CONCESSIONS IN THE SALT CONTROVERSY OVER THEIR BACKFIRE BOMBER AND THE US CRUISE MISSILE, WITHOUT RISKING A CHANGE IN THE BALANCE OF MILITARY POWER IN THE WORLD.

11. THE SOVIETS HAVE THE BACKFIRE BOMBER IN PRODUCTION. OUR CRUISE MISSILE, AN UNMANNED REMOTELY CONTROLLED WEAPON, WON'T BE OPERATIONAL FOR FIVE OR SIX YEARS. MOSCOW CAN AGREE TO LIMIT THE NUMBERS AND BASES AND REFUELING CAPACITY OF THE BACKFIRE SO THAT THIS BOMBER WILL NOT BE A THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES. THAT IS THE ISSUE THAT HAS BEEN WORRYING WASHINGTON--TO FREEDOM TO PRODUCE THE BACKFIRE IN UNLIMITED NUMBERS, AND BASE THEM WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES.

12. THIS IS AN IMMENSELY COMPLICATED MILITARY, SCIENTIFIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEM, AND NOTHING SAID HERE IS MEANT TO SUGGEST THAT MR. KISSINGER HAS GONE TO MOSCOW, ON DIRECTION FROM THE PRESIDENT, TO EASE MR. FORD'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS AT HOME.

13. BUT TO GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING, IT WAS THE SOVIETS WHO SUGGESTED THE KISSINGER VISIT, AND A HOPEFUL ASPECT IS THAT THEY RECOGNIZE THE DRIFT IN AMERICAN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL OPINION BACK TOWARD THE VENEMOUS DAYS OF THE 40'S, 50'S AND 60'S, AND FEEL THIS IS NOT IN THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST OR IN OURS.

14. IN ANY EVENT, COMPROMISES ON THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS FOR APPROVAL, AND, BEFORE THEY COULD BE PUT INTO OPERATION, HAVE TO MEET THE MOST SEARCHING ANALYSIS BY EXPERTS ON ATOMIC WEAPONS, LIKE FORMER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER, PAUL NITZE AND GERARD SMITH, WHO HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THE SOVIETS FOR YEARS.

15. STILL, EVEN A LIMITED COMPROMISE IN THE KISSINGER-SOVIET TALKS THIS WEEK IN MOSCOW WOULD BE A POLITICAL EVENT

IN THE CAMPAIGN IF NOTHING ELSE. IT WOULD HELP THE PRESIDENT EASE THE PRESSURE ON DETENTE AND THE RUSSIANS, AND THIS MAY AVE BEEN WHAT MOSCOW HAD IN MIND BY INVITING MR. KISSINGER TO THE SOVIET UNION IN THE FIRST PLACE.
(END TEXT) SISCO

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